

CoVid, debt, the King, et cet



eye of Bezos, head of Gudea: the Manager-Emperor.

his one eye a retiscope for overlaying tabs on the village that he takes, on the animals he calculates as chattel.

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death & the mask

the mask is a gag.

the mask weakens empathy.

the mask erases niceties, atomizes us.

the Distance makes us simple to a zoomed-out Eye.

much of early modern European statecraft seemed similarly devoted to rationalizing and standardizing what was a social hieroglyph into a legible and administratively more convenient format ¹

Le Corbusier laments that the early Christians were hard to track in the *slums*—let alone the catacombs.

¹ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like A State* [Yale UP, 1998], p 3

six feet out, Michael says, to get a clean read of your gait.

six feet apart, for a full-body print.

even after plastic surgery, wigs & crazy weight gain, the CIA could out you by your gait.

our two special powers—smiles & hugs—are suppressed.

our face is pent up, our expression displaced to the virtual—
where we're digitized & added to the data map.

where our chat can be tracked—there we are forced to foment
our rebellion.

the taverns & the churches, humming & full, the noise of the
playground—

intractable data.

a Quorum or more, a reunion of cuddles in full-face joy is
fuzzy/informal, a chaos Weather!

when relevant ads insinuate into our emailed intimacies, we're assured: no *human* reads your message.

rest assured, no coffee-sipping Stasi, severe in her stockings, oversees your Zoom reunion, snickers at your Tinder swipes.

it's something inhuman, who watches. it may not "understand", yet it's cracking us.

the Fed & CDC are pseudo-Federal consortiums of MBA lobbyists who present from a podium with the heraldry of State stamped afront.

note the bad blue curtains behind them, the Presidential curtains—a bluescreen. a spare set the day's Edict sends to CNN from, to be over-scored & framed within the neuro-jamming vector animations, lines that surge & fluoresce around the sombre suits like the dyoof dyoofs of a six-yr-old scrawling Star Wars on daddy's legal pad.

the Day's edict on the state of Health is Content for the intercutting ads: for the rapid-talking pushers of a Phase V drug you can talk to your doctor about.

Postscript, weeks later. the supra strikes me as paranoid, a bit.

the masks come off, for late summer pints. the patios hum,
come alive.

was it all just an Exercise? a year-long training for the Prodigy?

we acted out a simplified model of ourselves—a new Daddy pantomiming memes of the tribe for the Youngling coolly watching, for the genius Autist.

PostPostscript. a Doc favored by the Feds & by every agency in the first two pages of Google News links wants us to name & shame our neighbors this XMas. the masks are back on, are everywhere and the vaccine scam streams from CP24 thru the screen they bolt to the ceiling over dental chairs—like the Amber Alert that turns my phone on to frighten animals & sound me out of my hole when i free ten thousand children from your stinking labs—me & a loser dad.

five black goats, a requisition

the African musicians filed "a formal requisition for five live black goats" who were "brought into the theatre by night and sacrificed, hugger-mugger, according to tribal ritual, before being stretched into resonant drum skins"².

a witch doctor named Abdul led the drum troupe from Sierra Leone, "who, according to some contemporary reviews, dominated the show."³

² John Houseman, *Run-Through: A Memoir* [New York: Simon and Schuster 1972] p 190; quoted in Sawyer 2016, p 95

³ Robert Sawyer, "'All's Well that Ends Welles': Orson Welles and the 'Voodoo' *Macbeth*." in *Multicultural Shakespeare : Translation, Appropriation and Performance* vol 13:28, 2016, p 94.

the journal Sawyer reports this in is sensitive to cultural appropriation. yet Welles' Voodoo *Macbeth* was evil for authentically *enacting*, not "appropriating", African ritual.

the main appropriation here is of the goats' skin—whose vibes electrified the Lafayette Theatre & Harlem surrounding.

a rite that powers Welles' coming take-overs.

One reviewer, Percy Hammond of the Herald Tribune, was negative about the entire cast, accusing the actors of being inaudible and timid. In response, one of the African drummers created a voodoo doll of Hammond, stuck pins in it, and encouraged Welles to take responsibility for any torments Hammond suffered as a result. Welles says he found this amusing, until Hammond died shortly afterward.⁴

⁴ Wikipedia: "Voodoo Macbeth", accessed Oct 2 2020; summing and citing Barbara Leaming, *Orson Welles, A Biography*. Viking Press, 1985. p 109.

our engine is this crude: we kill, & we ascend by the release, by the heat given off.

we're this low-tech: we expose the Innocent to evil persistently, with the consistency of rite, so the dyad acts as battery poles.

the Temple is a City's central power. center of *it* is a terrified animal, bleeding out.

the Ontario Power Building is the high curve of glass at the base of Queen's Park that reflects a dozen abattoirs around it: the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, the Leslie Dan Pharmacy Building, Sick Kids, MaRS, - all the evil animal labs.

666 University Ave.

Netflix pretends to be my friend

a golden age of Television—how could one deny it? the service is superb.

these shows almost move me—that's why they're creepy.

these shows are in an Uncanny Valley. they're almost-humane.
unlike *The A-Team*, they threaten us, displace us.

these Series have no soul, yet are almost Dostoevsky.

the blatant manipulations—the '80s primetime soaps—now
seem quaint.

these lebensdramas — *The Story of Us, of O*— all the healthy sex
and the pillow-talk to follow—

these UHD Zombies!

i've yet to watch *The Wire*, i admit. and can't accept my crit applies to *Six Feet Under*—the last show i loved, and the only show my mother wrote an essay on.

can teleCOMM map my interior?

can 5G pilot waves map a home within? a fast-refreshing
render for the Matrix / Maata teleCOMM?

the surface of the social Interior! this would be a knowledge of
her*se/f*, should She claim us—fascistically or generously.

N_BossTRON, Apocalypse Watchman

N_BossTRON is a superAI Watchman, a Surveillance Demon with total kill-sat control.

even those who are highly suspicious of government surveillance would presumably favour a large increase in such surveillance if it were truly necessary to prevent occasional region-wide destruction. Similarly, individuals who value living in a sovereign state may reasonably prefer to live under a world government given the assumption that the alternative would entail something as terrible as a nuclear holocaust. Therefore, we stipulate that the term 'civilizational devastation' in VWH refers (except where otherwise specified) to any destructive event that is at least as bad as the death of 15 per cent of the world population or a reduction of global GDP by > 50 per cent lasting for more than a decade.⁵

⁵ Nick Bostrom, "The Vulnerable World Hypothesis". *Global Policy* [2019] 10:4.

sadly, N_BossTRON's Trainer, the Oxfordian Nick Bostrom, trained it to unleash its Tyranny should it ever predict **a long overdue, ecologically necessary, global GDP drop.**

sadly, the hi-IQ Oxfordian framed his "devastation" criterion within the presumptions of Industrialist Expansionism.

sadly, N_BossTRON shall stretch a Net over all Earth to stifle the Green Revolution, Isaiah's Paradise, & mass Buddhistic enlightenment.

then again, Bostrom defines "technology" very broadly, to include

not only machines and physical devices but also other kinds of instrumentally efficacious templates and procedures—including scientific ideas, institutional designs, organizational techniques, ideologies, concepts, and memes . . .

likewise, perhaps he would let **GDP** include gnostic BLISS and blue-green algae.

Theses on Kingship⁶

⁶ David Graeber & Marshall Sahlins, in *On Kings* [Hau Books, 2017]

The dynasty typically originates with a heroic prince from a greater outside realm: near or distant, legendary or contemporary, celestial or terrestrial.⁷

his public sign may be subtle, humble. Vito Corleone is an *immigrant*.

tho not [yet] "notorious for exploits of incest, fratricide, patricide, or other crimes against kinship"⁸, he does arrive an *orphan* to our land.

⁷ Graeber & Sahlins, p 5

⁸ Graeber & Sahlins, p 5

reading of an adulatory Herbert Hoover biography,⁹ i marvel at the several Supermen of the new 20th century, the advent of a Type with a Nation's own ascent.

the era of the Superman, of Hoover & Hearst, of Hemmingway & Orson Welles.

⁹ the SlateStarCodex review, March 17 2020

the Kingdom needs its legendary progenitor. a demiGod to enter it, & spread it.

young Hoover proves himself in feats of Biblical grandeur. there's a fabulous echo coming off his early works. in a foreign land, he ends a famine. he digs up treasures in the desert.¹⁰

he seems to *arrive*, in America. fresh from his faraway Labors.

¹⁰ i.e. supervises mines in Western Australia.

power comes in various physiques. yet *the King* is large, broad of chest & face. he's the African Big Man, the *Bahut Bara Aadmi*.

it's the obvious physiognomy of Orson Welles: who enters every scene the Boy Wonder; then dominates, soon is the Man.

theatre, radio, cinema.

Citizen Kane and *The Godfather*—our "great films", perennial critical faves.

yet also films *about* greatness: animated idols of the Great One.

the screenplay by Mankiewicz/Welles was called *The American*. in those heady years, the nominalized adjective means "Man of Destiny".

as pure adjective, the word is a great-maker, a maximalizer.

the Great American Film is Welles' displaced bio-pic, portrait of the demigod, himself—which translates, under capitalism, to "the great man of industry."

in an epoch of images, the king is the dominant image.

or: the dominant image *is* the king.

or: the king is an image *of* dominance. e.g. Drake memes.

either way, the king is *contained* by the image—by the formal constraints of the medium.

he's a profile of power, on a coin.

he's Kane bound in by the movie frame.

he shall not touch the ground [he's lofted by the light onto the screen] *nor shall his eyes see the sun* [he's held in dark halls, where we hush & bear witness.]

the great film *narrates* his containment. by Story's end, at the end of action, he's cut from social effect.

he's idol Prime, lain among his treasures. there among the
plunder of adventures.

like the glass world that slips from his hand: inert, bound-in, a
model.

a thing for us to contemplate, write essays on.

the title is ironic. the King has been reduced, made a citizen. he's bound to the City, to the cycle of our weekly entertainments.

Kings become invisible, immaterial, sealed off from contact with their subjects or with the stuff and substance of the world—and hence, often, confined to their palaces, unable to exercise arbitrary power (or often any power) in any effective way. When popular forces win, the result can thus take the form of Frazerian sacred kingship, or the reduction of the monarch to ceremonial figurehead, like the latter-day Zhou emperor or present-day queen of England.¹¹

¹¹ Graeber & Sahlins, p 8

we bind him in & worship him. priests control his body, start to end. anoint him at the crowning & embalming.

the king persists, in-state. his corpse is on display, at safe distance.

we file past, absorb his aura.

his body has gravity, a pull into the grave.

in our proximate witnessing, in our worship & our mourning,
we risk falling in with him.

we're shown the great corpse, then hit with the propaganda
antidote: "News on the March". whatever that week's bits, it's
a Progress propaganda, a novelty [News] of unison movement
[the March].

he's lofted by the light, into spectacle. the final fact passes into Myth, is brought within our own living story.

when i google Zeus

when i google Zeus, the top hit is **Zeus (fictional character)**.
a god in the Marvel Multiverse.

i scroll down pissily, past the lurid comicbook. i scoff at the He-
man glaring from his cloud, with his thunderbolt-javelin poised
over-shoulder.

i curse the stupid Action flick.

down i scroll, to an object of possible worship: **Zeus, king of the gods**.

cognate with Indra, Jupiter, Thor. . . yet the fourth name is empty, shows an open door: a *Slavic* god of thunder, war—

this i learn on click-thru.

Perun, hmm.

this new one disappoints me—why?

the info i am glad for. my impulse is to love the lesser god. to get his face on t-shirts, into Reddit memes—to let him live again, in our Epoch.

yet *where's the vivid image?* nothing to latch onto, to excite me. no marble cast for the G.I. Joe my mother lets me pick for my birthday from the action figure aisle.

the 12th Century figurine from Veliky Novgorod is thin & abstract as the *gromoviti znaci*, or "thunder marks" his people carve in roof beams & transoms to prove their loyalty & ward off sky-strikes.

Marvel supplants the Greeks, as the Greeks outshone adjacent Versions—other Euro patriarchs with meagre graphical design Depts, with poorer patrons, scantier triumphs of war to glorify them.

the image of god is a Victor's propaganda. the Victor is the team with the next-gen FX, with a crack team of Hollywood script doctors.

that "Jews control Hollywood"—so local, parochial, a notion!

the Abrahamic narrative, the Biblical mythos, has *totally* taken over!

Yahweh's face is everywhere: in svelter form, his youthful wayward Avatar.

a Chomsky need keep record

the techniques of Bibliography are tiresome to me. i seek a forum to perform where i may flout careful scholarship, and be *praised* for this by lazing cognoscenti in the endless comment-scroll.

yet i see, thru the haze of my hash pipe: a Chomsky need keep strict record of *where* he read it—the State Dept memo that ends U.S. hegemony.

Debt: The First 5,000 Years¹²

¹² by David Graeber, 2011

look again, it's lurking there in many key moments!

- first appearance of the word *freedom* in ancient writing is for *freedom from debt peonage or slavery*
- the first three Philosophers were Milesians, from where the first coins were circulating. these early Ontologists were obsessed with the question of how the Many could derive from the One: like the mystery of money, of a value malleable to any shape, of any metal, for any conceivable product.
- Plato's *Republic* begins with the Q *What is justice?* the first answer Socrates takes on is "Giving what is owed."

- sin is debt, the original debt. The Lord's Prayer asks for forgiveness of our *debts*—check the Hebrew & Latin.
- "self-interest", a term that appears right around Hobbes' time, is directly borrowed from Latin *interesse*, for interest payment

- Luther's earlier, less famous attacks were against usury. even Indulgences are a *spiritual* usury.
- yet he came around, compromised. the Reformation became a rise of Burghers, a lifting of the medieval bans on usury by Luther, Zwingli, & Calvin, so "by 1650, almost all Protestant denominations had come to agree with [Calvin's] position that a reasonable rate of interest (usually five percent) was not sinful", with some provisos. [322]

- our Final Reckoning shall magnify the annual Reckoning on the English Commons, the great communal Circle where our mutual debts were weighed & cross-cancelled, in a festival

a man's honor, by the size of his herd, by how much life he degrades. by how many virgins & virilities are consumed in his power.

At first sight it might seem strange that the honor of a nobleman or king should be measured in slaves, since slaves were human beings whose honor was zero. But if one's honor is ultimately founded on one's ability to extract the honor of others, it makes perfect sense. The value of the slave is that of the honor that has been extracted from them. [175]

- sold from one's starving family
- captured in war
- condemned for a capital crime

What do all these circumstances have in common? Al-Wahid's answer is striking in its simplicity: one becomes a slave in situations where one would otherwise have died. [169]

the billions held now in our labs & sheds: they too should be dead. but for the caprice of our Preference, but for our appetite's munificence they too'd have gone the way of those we burned thru these hundred millennia.

animals everywhere in this text, stock of the market exemplifying. yet Graeber never lets them into ethics. he's like the Capitalist he attacks: they're grist for his calculus. they're "20 chickens for a cow", homely & laughable for the undergrads. never spotted as the primary pawns of this whole affair, the heads cut off to start it. the gory *cap* in capitalism.

a Doom of Athens, reply to the pleadings of the Melians, of the besieged:

Of the gods we believe, and of men we know, that by a necessary law of their nature they rule wherever they can. And it is not as if we were the first to make this law, or to act upon it when made; we found it existing before us, and will leave it to exist forever after us; all we do is to make use of it, knowing that you and everybody else having the same power as we have would do the same as we do. ¹³

¹³ as recounted in Thucydides

vices you mistake as Universal! i understand your warring world, at last!

i appreciate this straight talk, from Athens. they clarify for History their error: the presumption that *we'd all do as they do*.

that *all men lust for power*.

they do not see us, skulking at the borders of their slaughter.
we the small, who solitary creep thru fields they've salted, where
we contemplate our difference from the Archon.

at last, in my 40s, i learn to hate Socrates. i learn, so late, his love of war, to dominate!

After putting in at Scione to collect reinforcements, Cleon and his men (Socrates now definitely included) sailed to Torone, where they overpowered the garrison and took the survivors captive. They enslaved the women and children, and sent the men to Athens as prisoners¹⁴

when he looked back on his life in his final days he expressed no regrets for his military occupation in the service of empire. He remarked, in fact, that he was confident that he had never been unjust to anyone (Plato Ap. 37a; Xenophon Defense 3.5.26).¹⁵

¹⁴ Mark Anderson, "Socrates as Hoplite", *Ancient Philosophy* 25 [2005] p 281

¹⁵ Anderson, p 287

the *last* thing we want to do, some of us, is dominate. the first thing to do is thus kill you when you come to our door.

or, disarm you with love. when you break into the homestead, have gestures ready to dispell your warrior's paranoia, your trauma of the centuries.

i learn so late: there really *are* men who lust for money per se—
for women, thus, who *look like* money.

- a sexualitas advanced of my own simple love of flesh.
these men are futuristic, for loving something wider
than a body
- in their way, they pass me on Diotima's ladder

i, too, love golden flesh—but not *because* it's shiny like an ingot!

i, too, would adorn her in jewels, paint her unnatural hues—yet not *because* the jewels & dyes are rare procurements!

the wedding industry, the mandatory potlach, the bride-price & dowry: do we deck our brides in gold so the gold is equated, in our gonad depths? is wedding dress a capitalist priming? so gold may be loved, & circulate free, & pass every border, every threshold?

- is money shiny so to seem itself valuable?
- do we value gold because it's *like* what we doubtless love: the Sun, and the skin it touches?

money is a debt to the future. money is a loan you've pawned
your future for.

the Economy must grow into—the world must *become*—the
putative Pile we borrow from.

Q.

why the *infinite* greed, the *desperate* greed of the Conquistadors? a greed that is joyless & grim, as it grows.

A.

by **compounding debt**, maybe endless. a mathematic artifice that makes itself an infinite demand.

an accounting trick: for multiplying suffering, to drive a planet's plundering.

money is a note by the King: to pay the Bank of England back.

the King looks like money, wears ermine & gold, so we all know he's good for it.

the Economy shall grow & be *reported* to grow: to assure its many Creditors it's *good for it*.

the King's a golden idol, and money is the gleam off it.

it's no cute nostalgia, the Royal Wedding. still a global spectacle, a pompous image multiplied—why?

- to show us that they're good for it: the King can pay *all of Money* back

Obama does his duty when he signs with Penguin Random House for 65 million, with Netflix for what, when Goldman Sachs throw cheques at his lecturing Person.

he holds up the Economy, demonstrates the value of his Office.

the Empire never ended! beneath the modern street, PKD sees Rome, Rome, everywhere!

The Bank's original home was in Walbrook, a street in the City of London, where during reconstruction in 1954 archaeologists found the remains of a Roman temple of Mithras (Mithras is – rather fittingly – said to have been worshipped as, amongst other things, the God of Contracts); the Mithraeum ruins are perhaps the most famous of all 20th-century Roman discoveries in the City of London and can be viewed by the public.¹⁶

¹⁶ Wik: Bank of **England**

Tribal Anthropology has been: a husband-wife team with a dictaphone held at the lips of a dying Elder. she speaks of a world before Money. her memories roam beyond the great Enclosure.